

comprising the steps of: cutting a base plate from thin-walled sheet metal drawn from a roll and in a flat state to a size corresponding to a circumference and breadth of a printing cylinder;

bending the base plate into a desired cylindrical form so that two edges of the base plate face one another;

permanently connecting together the two edges of the base plate with a welded metal seam that has an outwardly directed crown and so that the cylindrical base plate is expandable by pressurized air so that it can be slid onto the printing cylinder; and

processing the crown to form a homogeneous, uniform continuous outer surface formed of an outer sleeve surface and the weld seam so that format variable continuous printing is possible on the entire continuous outer surface.

12. (4X Amended) A process for producing an offset printing form, comprising the steps of:

producing a carrying sleeve for printing and transfer forms, which sleeve is slidable onto a printing cylinder by expansion with pressurized air, by cutting a base plate from thin-walled sheet metal drawn from a roll and in a flat state to a size corresponding to a circumference and breadth of a printing cylinder;

bending the base plate into a desired cylindrical form so that two edges of the base plate face one another;

permanently connecting together the two edges of the base plate with a welded metal seam that has an outwardly directed crown and so that the cylindrical base plate is expandable by pressurized air so that it can be slid onto the printing cylinder; and

processing the crown to form a homogeneous, continuous uniform outer surface formed of an outer sleeve surface and the weld seam, the processing step including chemically roughening and anodizing the hollow cylindrical form of the base plate and subsequently providing a photosensitive coating on the outer surface of the cylindrical form so as to create a printing form sleeve for format variable continuous printing.

14. (4X Amended) A process for producing a gravure printing form, comprising the steps of:

producing a carrying sleeve for printing and transfer forms, which sleeve is slidable onto a printing cylinder by expansion with pressurized air, by cutting a base plate from thin-walled sheet metal drawn from a roll and in a flat state to a size corresponding to a circumference and breadth of a printing cylinder, bending the base plate into a desired cylindrical form so that two edges of the base plate face one another, permanently connecting together the two edges of the base plate with a welded metal seam that has an outwardly directed crown and so that the cylindrical base plate is expandable by pressurized air so that it can be slid onto

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the printing cylinder, processing the [the] crown to form a homogeneous, continuous uniform outer surface formed of an outer sleeve surface and the weld seam; and

applying a metal coat to the processed outer surface and then mechanically processing the metal coat.

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16. (4X Amended) A process for producing a transfer form, comprising the steps of:

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producing a carrying sleeve for printing and transfer forms, which sleeve is slidable onto a printing cylinder by expansion with pressurized air, by cutting a base plate from thin-walled sheet metal drawn from a roll and in a flat state to a size corresponding to a circumference and breadth of a printing cylinder, bending the base plate into a desired cylindrical form so that two edges of the base plate face one another, permanently connecting together the two edges of the base plate with a welded metal seam that has an outwardly directed crown and so that the cylindrical base plate is expandable by pressurized air so that it can be slid onto the printing cylinder, and processing the [the] crown to form a homogeneous, continuous uniform outer surface formed of an outer sleeve surface and the weld seam; and

applying an endless rubber coating to the entire processed sleeve surface.

17. (4X Amended) A process for producing a printing form, comprising the steps of:

 producing a carrying sleeve for printing and transfer forms, which sleeve is slidable onto a printing cylinder by expansion with pressurized air, by cutting a base plate from thin-walled sheet metal drawn from a roll and in a flat state to a size corresponding to a circumference and breadth of a printing cylinder, bending the base plate into a desired cylindrical form so that two edges of the base plate face one another, permanently connecting together the two edges of the base plate with a welded metal seam that has an outwardly directed crown and so that the cylindrical base plate is expandable by pressurized air so that it can be slid onto the printing cylinder, and processing the crown to form a homogeneous, continuous uniform outer surface formed of an outer sleeve surface and the weld seam; and

applying an endless ceramic coat to the entire processed sleeve surface.